

The Chevron Championship

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Rancho Mirage, California, USA

Mission Hills Country Club

Patty Tavatanakit

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Here with Patty Tavatanakit who this time last year got to make the famed leap into Poppie's Pond, our defending championship, winner. Welcome back to the desert. As you think back to last year, what are some of the memories that come to your mind of that big breakthrough win here?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Probably a lot of good things happened here, you know. I played my first time here as an amateur. Look back, see a lot of good stuff. Look around, the view is really nice. And that's what I remember most about this course, is how nice the views are.

Just takes your mind out of golf a little bit when you're playing.

Q. You had an incredible four days here last year. How locked in were as you think back to last year? How strong was your play last year as you came to take your first major title?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I think I everything was going really well last year, happened at the right time, at the right moment, and that's golf. It's just timing. That happened to be the week.

So I was really fortunate to grab that trophy on Sunday, but you can't really expect to do that, repeat that, because it's just life. You can't expect to do the same thing every single day because there is going to be this and that and not everything is going to be the same.

Just going to keep that into my perspective.

Q. You still went on to an incredibly successful year. Played well at the majors; won the Rolex Annika Major Award; so many honors for you. Looking back to 2021 before we look ahead to 2022, what did you take from yourself as an athlete, as a person, as a player from all your successes and the moments you had to stop and think and learn? How did that help you grow?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I think every week you learn

about what works for you, what doesn't work for you, what you do well to perform well or what you have to do to perform well. I think that's what I learned the most.

It's a learning curve these days, I would say. At majors I tend to be a little bit more in tune with what I'm doing. I want to here more than just a regular event, because I do enjoy my time at home, but at the same time just being here and enjoying, embracing the beauty of it, of traveling and being on tour, is also important.

Q. So you started off really well this year. No finish worse than 26; couple Top 10s; few top 13s. What's the state of your game now? You last tee'd it up when the tour was in Thailand a couple weeks ago.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I would say my game, if anything, was better than last year. I feel like everything was more solid, everything was in place position-wise. Just a matter of the execution here and there. Didn't really have the timing going right for me at the right moment, but that's just golf and life.

So just got to really take what you can take.

Q. What were the emotions like when you walked by and saw your name on the walk, on the plaque, and just the fact that this is the last time here?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Honored to have my name right there next to all the Hall of Famers and past champions. Proud to put my name there. I actually took a picture with it. Just a nice feeling.

I mean, makes me love this place even more regardless how I do this week.

Q. Do you feel any emotions about this being the last time here?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It's a bittersweet good-bye I guess. What Chevron did to this tournament, raising the purse and really growing the women's game, it's something truly what we're after, what everyone is after.



I was at champion's dinner last night and the Hall of Famer, Juli Inkster said the goal is to grow the game, and that's what we're heading towards, which is a great thing.

At the same time, having to move this event out of California, out of the desert, it's sad. I love coming back here. But we're evolving and changing, and we always look forward to what's new.

Q. What was your favorite part of the champion's dinner last night?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Probably the food. It was cooked by chef Thomas Keller. I was really honored to work with him on the menu and had a really nice meal. All the past champions were there. Felt really honored to be there, even though it was -- it was nice.

Q. What did you have?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: So we had short ribs, really, really good meat with some dark chocolate desert. Chef Keller did a really great job creating that menu, because I just told him I love beef.

Q. Did you request ribs?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: No. Just told him any kind of steak or beef. And he did a great job.

Q. You say your game, if anything, was better. How can it be better than what you did last year? You were so dominate. Took a 62 to get close to you last year.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It's just a feeling. It is -- I would say it is better. That's just how I feel with my game. If anything, last year I was working on some stuff and I happened to execute better than this year.

Because if you were to ask me ten more times, hundred times, I would say it is better than last year. Scores are scores. You can't really control that, but you can control what you're doing with the process, what you can do to become a better player.

I already feel that I'm becoming a better player than last year.

Q. What part about this golf course works best for your game?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Probably the length, and you got execute well here, because if you end up making a mistake -- I mean, you have to have good short game. Just well-rounded course, well-rounded type of player.

Q. Have you been out on the course yet?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yes.

Q. Is the rough as tough as it was last year or not quite?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: If you're in the rough, regardless of what the course is, I mean, it's going to be tougher to get back in position.

You just got to play from where you are.

Q. The proper answer is I don't know how the rough is; I was in the fairway all day. (Laughter)

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Is that what you want to hear? I mean, you're asking me.

Q. What parts of your game do you consider better now than a year ago?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Just well-rounded more, more shots, more structure, more shots, and just more solid. Because last year there was still some funky stuff going on, but I managed to play well with it.

Q. What funky stuff was going on?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: It was just with my swing, I have to always think about it. Now I don't have to really think about it. That's what I like most about my game this year, is everything is in place. All I need to care is just put everything in place.

At the same time, sometimes you feel good about your game and you're not playing well; sometimes you feel okay but your scoring is amazing.

So...

Q. Talk about the learning curve out here on the LPGA. What do you know now that you didn't know going into the win last year?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I still don't know a lot of stuff. I mean, it is a tough question to answer. What do I know now? I know that I shouldn't work out on a Tuesday because that wouldn't help me on Thursday. That's what I learned, I guess.

Just depending on what you face.

Q. You learned which hotels you like and don't like.



PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yeah, what to eat, what not to eat.

Q. I remember talking to you few years ago when you were out here as an amateur. You came out here rather than going to Augusta. I think that might have been the first year of Augusta Women's Championship. Talk about how you came to that decision and your appreciation of this tournament once you became a professional and came out here year after year.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: So I remember that year I came out. It was a tough decision because you're giving up an opportunity to go to Augusta National. I mean, at the end of the day you want to stick to what was best for me. At the time I was at UCLA. It just didn't make sense for me to fly across the country three hours ahead and being on the east coast, when I can just literally drive to a major championship.

If I were to go back in time I would still do that with my full heartbeat. It was just a tough decision, but that was where it was laying out for me. At the end of the day, I wanted to play this event for my career. Look ahead, probably going to come back here and play.

I want to have the experience of playing in majors and just the nerves, and it was just -- makes more sense to me. That's why I picked that.

But no one should have had that big decision picking, because you shouldn't have to pick what's best for your career. Both are really good for your career, and next year no one have to pick that anymore. I'm so glad to hear that. We're going to move it I think a month ahead.

We don't know, but it's not going to be the same week, so I'm really happy that no one have to pick and choose between Augusta and a major, because it is a tough choice.

Q. Is it kind of bittersweet that this is the last one in the desert?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Yes. That's what I said earlier.

Q. Are there any traditions that you hope follow to Texas from this event in?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I would say the pond, you know, jumping into the pond. That's just -- you know, when you come to this major, like you imagine the winner jumping into the pond.

I really hope they do that, continue that tradition. But if anything, it's -- we are evolving, changing, and the girls out here are always open for it.

Q. What's your strategy coming down 18 in terms of when it's a green light for you?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: Just be smart with it. If I can go for it, I will. But if I don't, my wedge game is there, and I believe that four days, if I layup four days I could be 1- or 2-under.

Q. What club do you have to have in your hand to hold that green?

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: I think it's like a perfect number. Doesn't have -- you know, 5-wood or 3-wood might not be ideal because we don't have a backstop anymore.

Q. Uh-huh.

PATTY TAVATANAKIT: But it just has to be -- everything has to be perfect. Perfect condition, perfect lies, perfect club, yardage. I agreed on that with my caddie, that we just -- we can just wedge it in and make a putt, too.

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